



# The Bible's Big Story

## Genesis 12–50

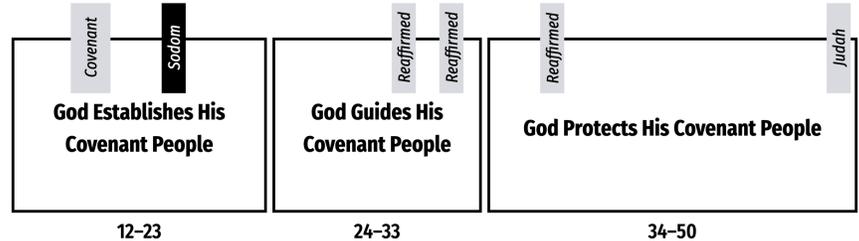
The second half of Genesis focuses primarily on God working out his redemptive purposes through the family of Abraham whom God calls out of his homeland with a threefold promise—land, numerous offspring, and blessing for all the earth—which is later formalized as a covenant. The fulfillment unfolds through unlikely means: barren women, younger sons chosen over firstborns, and divine intervention at every turn, underscoring that the covenant's ultimate fulfillment depends entirely on God's faithfulness rather than human effort. Abraham himself stumbles repeatedly, yet God consistently intervenes to protect the promise.

The narrative continues through Isaac and Jacob, with God personally reaffirming the covenant to each of them in turn. Although their lives are marred by envy, deceit, and moral shortcomings, they are distinguished by God's sovereign decision to accomplish His purposes through them.

The final section centers on Joseph, sold into Egyptian slavery by his own brothers but elevated to second-in-command over Egypt through God's guidance. His story brings the entire covenant family down to Egypt, setting the stage for Exodus. Jacob's deathbed blessing of Judah points forward to a future king who will rule all peoples, concluding Genesis with a look forward toward a promised deliverer yet to come.

## Structure of Genesis

### Patriarchal History



### Redemption Revealed in Genesis

#### The Promised Seed

From the moment of the fall in chapter 3, God promised a seed of the woman who would crush the serpent's head and undo the curse. This theme runs through all of Genesis with each generation raising the possibility that the promised deliverer has arrived. Yet each one is born a sinner and falls short. Instead, we look for a future Seed: an offspring of Abraham through whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed, who will break the power of sin and reverse the curse.

#### Sin & Judgment

Genesis clearly portrays sin's progression from generation to generation and its disastrous effects on humanity. It also makes clear—through the flood, the scattering at Babel, and the destruction of Sodom—that God does not overlook sin. Judgment will fall on those who persist in rebellion against Him.

#### Sovereign Election

Genesis displays God's absolute sovereignty in both providence and election. He works through children born to barren women, through second-born sons, and through deceivers, adulterers, and prisoners. They are clearly chosen, not because of anything admirable in them, but according to his own purpose and will. This demonstrates that the hope of redemption rests not in human ability, but in God alone.

#### Covenant Faithfulness

God's faithfulness to his covenant promises is constant throughout Genesis, even when the godly seem certain to derail his purposes through their own weakness and sin. Despite all their failures and shortcomings, God remains faithful to his word. Although the promise is not yet fully realized at the close of Genesis, not one word of what God promised fails to come to pass.

### Outline of the Summary Overview

- I. **God Establishes His Covenant People (Gen. 12–23)**
  - A. The Call of Abram (Gen. 12–14)
  - B. The Covenant With Abraham (Gen. 15–17)
  - C. The Sodom Interlude (Gen. 18–19)
  - D. The Child of Abraham (Gen. 20–23)
- II. **God Guides His Covenant People (Gen. 24–33)**
  - A. The Journey to Find Rebekah (Gen. 24)
  - B. The Sojourn of Isaac (Gen. 25–26)
  - C. The Promise Restated (Gen. 26:1–5)
  - D. The Choosing and Sojourn of Jacob (Gen. 27–33)
- III. **God Preserves His Covenant People (Gen. 34–50)**
  - A. The Promise Restated (Gen. 35)
  - B. The Captivity of Joseph (37–45)
  - C. The Coming to Egypt (46–50)

